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Les petits Mammifères de la France. Par Dr. E. L. Trouessart. From the author.

Sur les constructions turriformes des Vers de terre de France. Par M. E. L. Trouessart. From the author.

Memoires de la Société Géologique de France. Troisième série, Tome second. iv. Recherches sur les Reptiles trouvés dans le Gault de l'est du bassin de Paris. Par M. H. E. Sauvage. From the author.

Nachträge zur Dyas II. Von Dr. H. Bruno Geinitz und Dr. J. Victor Deichmüller. Ext. from Mittheilungen aus dem Königl. mineralogisch-geologischen und prae-historischen Museum in Dresden. From the authors.

Studien ueber die fossilen Reptilien Russlands. Von W. Kiprijanoff. II. Theil. Gattung Plesiosaurus. Ext. Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale de Sciences de St. Petersburg. From the author.

On the results of recent explorations of erect Trees containing animal remains in the Coal formation of Nova Scotia. By J. W. Dawson. Ext. Philosophical Trans. Royal Society. From the author.

Allen's Human Anatomy. Section III, Muscles and Fasciae. By Dr. Harrison Allen. From the author.

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## GENERAL NOTES.

### GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.<sup>1</sup>

AFRICA.—Commander Gallini, gives, in the last *Bulletin* of the Paris Geographical Society, a map and illustrations of the scenery of the Upper Niger and Segou, showing formations that somewhat resemble the buttes of North America.

Mr. J. Thomson has left for Zanzibar, and trusts, about the middle of March to start upon a journey of exploration along the east coast of the Victoria Nyanza. He will also penetrate into the Masai country. The expedition is at the expense of the Royal Geographical Society, and will probably be absent about two years.

F. Lupton Bey's last letter, dated May 10th, 1882, gives some latitudes that affect materially the maps of the countries to the west of the Upper Nile. He refers to a lake called Key-el-Aby, which is evidently the Kœydabo of Count Escayrac de Lauture, and the "vast lake" heard of by Heuglin and Miani. Its position appears to be in about lat. 2° N., long. 25° E., or within a hundred miles of the Congo.

The January issue of the proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society contains an account of Dr. Junker's explorations in the region of the Wellè, near the Monbutta country. Dr. Junker accompanied the Egyptian detachment sent in pursuit of Manbangà. The real name of the Welle is Mákua, since Welle is but the native name for river. In about lat. 4° N., long. 26° E., the Mákua receives a considerable tributary from the south, named the Bomokándi, but on Dr. Schweinfurth's map figured as the Nemayo, another name signifying river. The country between the Mákua and Bomokándi is inhabited by a negro tribe,

<sup>1</sup>This department is edited by ELLIS H. YARNALL, Philadelphia.

governed by Zanileh chiefs. Beyond the Bomokándi live the A-Babúa, who speak a tongue akin to the Monbutta. From the A-Mezimá country, Dr. Junker went south, to visit the chief Bakangar; thence ten days east to Kanna's, and thence northward to Tangasi, near Munza's old residence.

From thence he went three days east to the Zeriba Kabba, and thence to Gango and the head of the Gádda river in the Momvú country. On March 26th, last, he left Kabbi to visit Munza's two brothers, who live beyond the upper Bomokandi. "If native information can be trusted," says Dr. Junker, "the Mákua is the head stream of the Shari, whilst the Nepoko, a river rising far to the east and flowing south, is Stanley's Aruwimi," and thus a tributary of the Congo.

The French are rapidly advancing their hold upon the Niger. Ahmada, King of Sego, signed in March, 1881, a treaty by which he placed his kingdom under French protection. A force of about 1000 men is now organized upon the Upper Senegal, destined for Bamaku, on the Niger, and a railway which was commenced last year, is to connect Kai, at the head of navigation on the Senegal, with the Kila and the Niger.

The Ancobra River and Axim Gold District, upon the Gold Coast, have been roughly surveyed, with a view to the construction of a road to Targuah, the center of the mining district. Western Akim and Aguna are rich in gold.

THE OASIS OF OUARGLA.—One of the most important oases of the Sahara, and one which will be of great importance to the French in the event of the construction of a trans-Saharan railway, is that of Ouargla. This oasis is situated in a large valley which, according to tradition, was formerly one vast garden, containing 125 villages and 1055 artesian wells. Even now the oasis of Ouargla, with the adjoining smaller ones, contains more than 450,000 palm trees. Artesian water is found at thirty-five meters (about 115 ft.), and the soil, like that of the schotts and "sebkhas" around is quartz sand, more or less charged with gypsum and sea-salt. These salts are more abundant in the uncultivated region, yet a certain quantity is needed for the prosperous growth of the palm.

The strata around the depression are Quaternary, while those of the water-bearing area itself are modern or recent alluvium. The lower and wetter portions of this and similar areas are called "sebkhas," while the shallow pools are "schotts." The shells found, fossil or sub-fossil, in this region are principally those which live in fresh or brackish water, the sole exception being the common cockle of the old world (*Cardium edule*), which is, however, abundant near the mouths of rivers and in lagoons. M. Rolland's conclusion is, that the Quaternary deposits of the Sahara are those of a vast closed sea or lake.—*Revue Scientifique*.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.—M. Desiré Charnay has returned to France from his travels in Yucatan, where he has studied the ruins of Aké, Chichenitza and other cities. Aké is one of the oldest centers of the peninsula, and contains from eighteen to twenty pyramids, which, with what remains of their superstructure, belong to the early "cement" epoch of Toltec architecture. M. Charnay does not credit the great age some attribute to Toltec remains, but believes those of Yucatan not to antedate the commencement of the fifteenth century. Chichenitza is of hewn stone, and is more modern than Aké. Near the junction of the Mexican provinces Chiapas and Tabasco with Guatemala, M. Charnay found the remains of a center not before known except to the mahogany-cutters, and named it "Lorillard City," after the well-known P. Lorillard, who partially defrayed the expenses of the expedition. The ruins greatly resemble those of Palenque.—Colonel Prejevalsky is superintending the printing of the account of his third journey, which is promised to appear before he sets out upon his fourth expedition, which will be in March of this year.—The Swedish expedition to Spitzbergen, under the leadership of Baron G. de Geer and Herr Nathorst, has furnished maps which give the outlines of the fjords and valleys of the southern part of that island, and the relative depths of the sea around it and Scandinavia. A comparatively level plateau extends between these two lands, which may be considered as ridges rising from it. West of Spitzbergen this plateau sinks abruptly into the ocean. The mountain sculpturing of Spitzbergen is due to the action of glaciers during the glacial epoch, after which a subsidence occurred, followed by a considerable elevation, proved by the existence of gravel beaches and marine beds far inland. The plants and animals of the island are Scandinavian, and this fact, as well as the fossils present, point to a probable former land connection along the line of the plateau, causing the Gulf Stream to bathe the western coasts of Spitzbergen and give it a milder climate than at present.

#### GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

INTERMITTENT WELLS IN NEBRASKA.—In the neighborhood of Shelby, Polk county, Nebraska, are many wells which exhibit peculiar phenomena of intermittence. The wells of the district vary from 100 to 140 feet in depth, and ebb and flow irregularly. The flow is accompanied by a roaring sound like that of the sea, as though a distant wave were coming in, and at the same time a current of air issues out of the mouth of the well. The ebb is accompanied by a draft of air downwards into the well.

The period of ebb and flow does not appear to depend upon heat or cold, upon the dampness or dryness of the atmosphere, upon the season of the year, or upon the time of day; but, on the other hand, seems to be in some way connected with the direction